

DO THE MATH...

What do the numbers mean?

Here is a helpful guide to the identification code and the top 3 plastics that can be recycled:



PET (Polyethylene terephthalate)
Drink bottles & polyester fibres



HDPE (High Density Polyethylene)
Milk, shampoo & cleaning product bottles and containers (white or coloured)



PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride)
Cordial and juice bottles (clear)

RARELY RECYCLABLE



LDPE (Low Density Polyethylene)
Soft, flexible plastic, waxy surface - garbage bags.



PPP (Polypropylene)
Hard, flexible plastic - ice cream tubs & take away containers and lids.



PS (Polystyrene)
Clear, glassy, rigid, brittle plastic - yoghurt & margarine containers.



EPS

OTHER
Includes all other plastics & soft plastics including acrylic and nylon.
Foamed, light weight, energy absorbing, heat insulating - Packaging, meat trays, hot drink cups, foam packing.

Kerbside recycling differs according to region, some are better than others. **Check with your council** for details.

A FEW GOOD REASONS

Alternatives to plastic can be better for you and the world. Here's why...

Plastics use precious resources.

The raw materials for plastic are petroleum and natural gas.

There's nasty stuff in plastics.

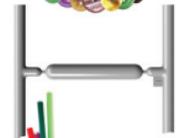
Plastics can contain toxic chemicals, fillers, pigments, flame retardants, endocrine disruptors and agents to affect it's strength, texture, flexibility and colour. Depending on conditions, these can potentially leach out into our food and beverages, read up on *BPA, Phthalates, Lead, Calcium, Styrene, and PFCs*.

Think of the workers.

The addition of toxic chemicals to plastics and polymers at the manufacturing stage causes emissions that can harm the factory workers (most often, the poorer citizens of our planet) by increasing dioxin levels and potentially attacking the immune systems and reproductive ability.

There is no away.

Every piece of plastic we have ever used is still on the planet today. Plastic does not biodegrade, it *photodegrades*, which means it just breaks up into smaller and smaller pieces in the environment. If landfilled, chemicals can leach, if burned in an incinerator, there are toxic emissions and a lot of plastic recycling is actually downcycling. If you use plastics.. rather than recycle.. reuse and redesign. Innovate and have fun!



Life too plastic? Can you live without polymer?

But isn't plastic sometimes the answer?

Your pocket guide to doing without and feeling pretty good about it too.

SET YOURSELF FREE

AND ENJOY DOING IT!

This resource was developed for you by **catfish**. Alone we are a drop. Together an ocean.

Is your life too

PLASTIC?

When did we find ourselves living in such a plastic world? How does it affect our environment, our lives, our health and ultimately the future of our planet?

We can't deny for a second that plastic makes our lives convenient – it contains stuff for us, keeps things sterile, makes things waterproof – but we need to stop using it when it is utterly replaceable... We live in an age of convenience and over-consumption and our lives are arguably **way too plastic**. It's time to change that. And to have fun making the change.

Innovate.

No solution is perfect, but over and above recycling (or often downcycling) plastics, reusing and repurposing can be really good fun, with a little imagination and ingenuity, old can be like new and once conventional things can be unique.

Appreciate.

Learn, share and get inspired, start conversations worth having, shop locally, avoid packaging and be healthier as a result, feel the benefits of connecting more with your community and the world around you, leave a legacy for your kids.

While you're at it, get out and do a beach clean!

Guide and content by CattfishCreative.com.au
Printed on recycled stock with soy inks by [anviroprint](http://anviroprint.com.au)
We support those that support us.

10 EASY WAYS TO USE LESS

- 1 Don't bottle it.** Unless you are travelling an overseas location where the water supply is dubious, bottled water is wasteful, expensive and potentially bad for your health (see the section overleaf on *nasty stuff*). **Drink tap water, from a glass.** Simple.
- 2 Coffee to go?** Why not take some time and **drink in?** Leave the house earlier and enjoy some time taking in the morning aromas and chatter at your local cafe. Unrealistic with today's manic schedule? Then get yourself a **reusable coffee-cup**, available in steel, ceramic, silicone and tested BPA-free plastics.
- 3 Ok. Bottle it.** So you need to carry your water with you? Get yourself a **stainless steel water bottle** and fill up through the day. You want bubbles? Use a soda stream to add some effervescence!
- 4 The last straw.** Do you really need that straw? **They suck.** If you really struggle without one... perhaps that morning smoothie gives you a big unsexy milk moustache? Then get yourself a stainless steel or glass straw and use it over and over again!
- 5 Bag of spanners.** Carry real cutlery in your bag so you can avoid using single-use stuff when you are out and about. It feels more like home and makes the food taste better.
- 6 Bag it.** Carry a canvas reusable bag with you when shopping (always have some in the car) so you can **say no** to the check out chick or chap when they offer you a single-use lightweight bag. Thanks to hipsters, baskets are becoming cool again too.
- 7 Compost revolution. Get composting.** The revolution is happening, don't let it happen without you. Compost your food waste and you can use way less garbage bags! Look out for local council initiatives that offer information and support, there's lots out there.
- 8 Glassy eyed.** When you shop, eye up the items in **glass containers**, cardboard boxes, sacks and tins. Containers can be reused easily and more often than not, the food is higher quality, often organic and tasty as.
- 9 To market!** Go to the local markets. Get your yummy food there. You don't need your tomatoes in clingfilm on a styrofoam tray from a supermarket when you can grab them, smell them and caress them before you throw them in your canvas bag at your local market. Support your local growers. It tastes better and you get to meet the people that actually grow your fruit and veggies.
- 10 Get wood.** Need to buy toys and games? There are still lots of wonderful traditional wooden toys and games crafted for kids and adults alike. Organic materials are much safer for the young ones to be popping into their mouths and they last a lot longer so can get handed down to the next generation of little'uns.